



State Highlights in Conservation: Utah

Profile of State Program(s)

Utah LeRay McAllister Critical Land Conservation

Fund: Established in 1999 and conceived as an incentive program to encourage the conservation of valuable landscapes, the LeRay McAllister Critical Land Conservation Fund – administered by the Utah Quality Growth Commission – provides matching funds for the preservation and restoration of critical open lands, wildlife habitat, watershed protection areas, scenic and historic lands, and agricultural lands. Legislative appropriations are capped at a maximum of \$6 million annually, however funding has dwindled in recent years; the fund receives monies from a range of other sources, including private contributions and proceeds from the sale of state surplus lands. Recipients of grants include Utah counties, cities, and towns, the Utah Department of Natural Resources, the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food, and nonprofit organizations. The Fund has also leveraged money from the federal government, other state and local governments, and private sources, including landowner donations.

In order to acquire farmland, the Critical Agricultural Land Conservation Fund, administered by the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food, was established in 1999 to receive the proceeds of the sale of surplus state lands. The fund was capped at \$100,000, and allocations were made at the direction of the state's Critical Resource Lands Conservation Committee. The Committee focused on purchasing development rights on working farms and securing long-term leases to agricultural property in an attempt to keep critical resource lands in private ownership. From 2000 to 2004, the Fund assisted in establishing easements on nine properties in Utah. The Utah Department of Agriculture and Food does hold conservation easements, and money for new easements has come from FRPP (now ACEP, as of February 2014), the LeRay McAllister Fund, private foundations, and other public and private sources, including landowner donations.

In 2019, the legislature appropriated \$3.4 million for the LeRay McAllister Critical Lands Conservation Fund.

State Wildlife Management Program: The Utah Division of Wildlife Resources within the Department of Natural Resources preserves habitat and administers

wildlife management areas and, within these areas, owns and manages highly valued wildlife habitat. Funding for these projects comes from the LeRay McAllister Critical Land Conservation Fund and revenue received from the sale of hunting and fishing licenses, permits, stamps, and certificates of registration, which are deposited into a Wildlife Habitat Account. This account is utilized to benefit wildlife habitat and to improve public access for hunting and fishing.

Substantial State Investment

Through its LeRay McAllister Critical Land Conservation Fund, Utah provides the financial incentives to encourage a range of land conservation partners to step forward and acquire important lands in the state. The State has also established a purchase of development rights program, encouraged public-private partnerships through its Envision Utah effort and collaborated with the federal government to enhance land conservation through participation in the Forest Legacy Program and the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program.

State Incentive for Local Conservation Funding

LeRay McAllister Critical Land Conservation Fund provides matching funds for the preservation and restoration of critical open lands, wildlife habitat, watershed protection areas, scenic and historic lands, and agricultural lands. Recipients of grants include local governments, state agencies, and nonprofit organizations. Since its inception, the Fund has also leveraged money from federal, other state, local government, and private sources, including landowner donations. On average, the Commission funds about 20 to 25 percent of total project costs.

Public-Private Partnerships

In January 1997, the Envision Utah Public/Private Partnership was formed to guide the development of a broadly and publicly supported Quality Growth Strategy. This strategy encompasses a vision to protect Utah's environment, economic strength, and quality of life for generations to come. Comprised of citizens, business leaders, and policy-makers, Envision Utah strives to create a strategy to preserve critical lands,

promote water conservation and clean air, improve transportation, and provide housing options for all residents. As part of its effort to protect critical lands, Envision Utah helps communities identify critical areas and develop conservation strategies for those lands, but it does not provide funding for their acquisition. Envision Utah receives funding from private individuals and foundations and significant support from the state and local governments.

Local Financing Enabled

Counties have the enabling authority to put a general obligation bond measure on the ballot for open space and to levy a dedicated sales tax for open space via ballot measure. Cities may also put an open space bond measure before voters. Of the conservation measures passed in Utah, most have been for general obligation bonds.

Local Programs Included

Local conservation programs include:

- Park City, UT
- Salt Lake City, UT
- Salt Lake County, UT
- Snyderville Basin Recreation District

Visit www.landvote.org for detailed information on these programs.

Federal Partnerships

Federal agencies and programs that have conserved land in Utah include:

- U.S. Bureau of Land Management
- U.S. Bureau of Land Management – Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA)
- U.S. Forest Service
- U.S. Forest Service – Forest Legacy Program (FLP)
- U.S. National Park Service
- U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service – Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP)
- U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service – Grassland Reserve Program (GRP)
- U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service – Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)



The Trust for Public Land creates parks and protects land for people, ensuring healthy, livable communities for generations to come.

The Conservation Almanac

A comprehensive database of land conservation and public conservation funding in America, the Conservation Almanac provides a context for assessing impacts of conservation and the growing conservation finance movement. The Almanac offers information on public dollars spent and acres conserved, details on local, state, and federal conservation programs, and geospatial mapping of conserved land.

Almanac data collection efforts focus on land conserved using public dollars; contributions funded by private and non-governmental organizations are not tracked comprehensively. Federal data is complete from 1998-2017. State and local data is complete from 1998-2017. In the tables and charts below, acres are allocated to each program proportionate to the size of the contributions to each acquisition. For example, if an acquisition had two contributions, and each program contributed equal dollar amounts, each program receives 50% of the acres. If you have questions or want to provide updated information, please contact Jessica Welch at jessica.welch@tpl.org.

www.tpl.org

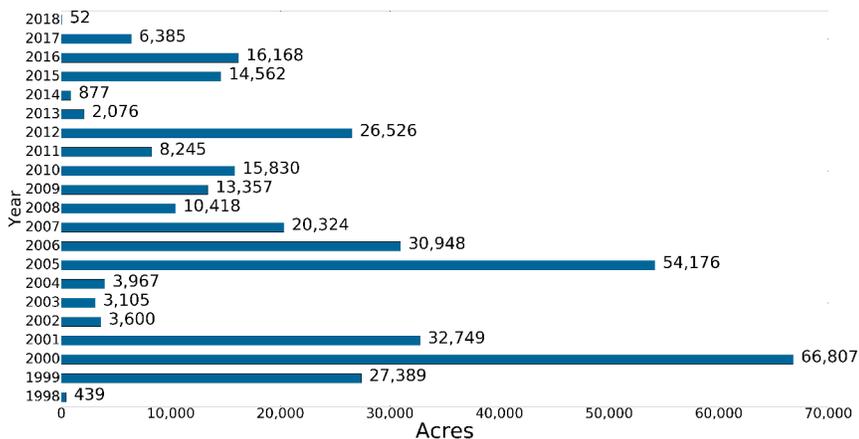
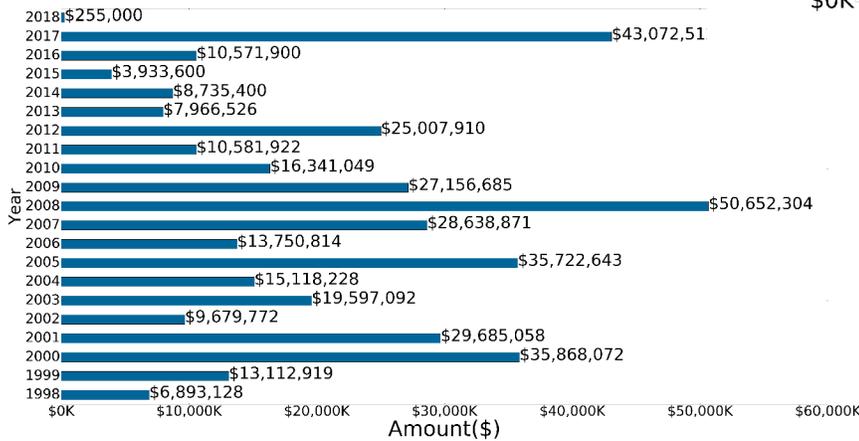
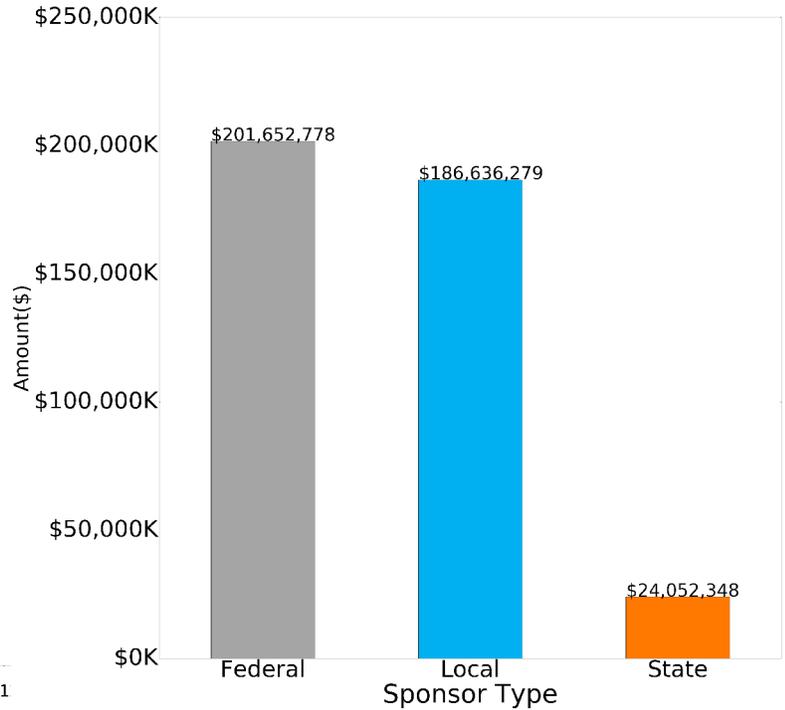
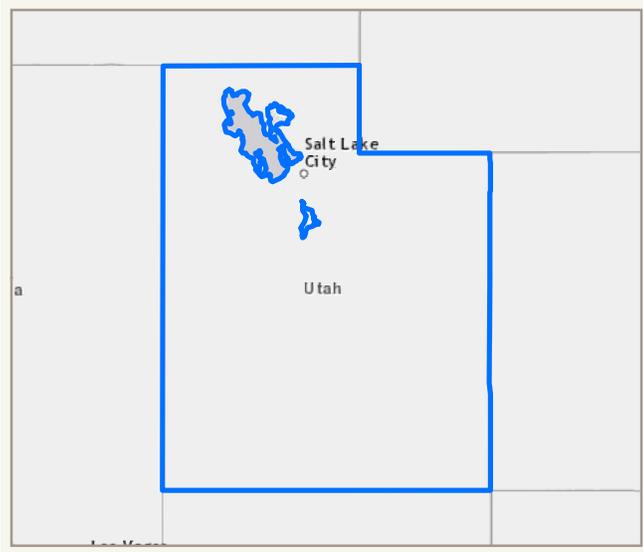
www.conservationalmanac.org

State Conservation Report Utah



CONSERVATION ALMANAC
Tracking Investments in Protected Lands

November 20, 2020



The data in the Conservation Almanac track the impacts of public spending on land conservation. Created by The Trust for Public Land, the Conservation Almanac brings those data together along with state policy profiles, current conservation finance news, and an interactive map, to provide a powerful online tool.